

Message Text

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11

ACTION EA-14

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, KS, KN

SUBJ: REACTION TO PRESIDENT PARK'S PRESS CONFERENCE

REF: SEOUL 447

1. EDITORIAL REACTION AND NEWS REPORTS OF PRESIDENT PARK'S JANUARY 18 NEW YEAR PRESS CONFERENCE FOCUSED MAINLY ON NON-AGGRESSION PACT PROPOSAL, WHICH THEY UNEQUIVOCALLY WELCOMED. COMMON THEME WAS REASONABLENESS OF PARK'S PROPOSAL IN CONTRAST WITH "UNREALISTIC" AND PROPAGANDISTIC NORTH KOREAN PEACE PACT IDEA. PRESS ALSO NOTED WITH APPROVAL PRESIDENT PARK'S STATED GOAL OF "PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE." CHANGANG ILBO, FOR EXAMPLE, SAID "THOSE SUPPORTING PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE SEEK TO MITIGATE THE CONFRONTATION, TENSION, ANGUISH AND SACRIFICE RESULTING FROM NATIONAL DIVISION BY ACCEPTING THE STATE OF DIVISION AS AN ESTABLISHED FACT. THUS VIEWED, PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE IS THE ONLY WAY AVAILABLE FOR THE MOMENT TO HELP USHER IN PEACEFUL NATIONAL UNIFICATION."

2. TONGA ILBO WAS ONLY NATIONAL NEWSPAPER TO OMIT EDITORIAL COMMENT ON PRESS CONFERENCE. HOWEVER, TONGA WELCOMED NON-AGGRESSION PACT PROPOSAL IN FEATURE ARTICLE JAN 19.

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3. SPOKESMEN FOR THREE MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES ALSO ENDORSED NON-

AGGRESSION PACT PROPOSAL. OPPOSITION NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY (NDP) VIEWED IT AS "TIMELY MEASURE TO BUILD A BASIS FOR NATIONAL UNIFICATION." NDP ALSO APPLAUDED PRESIDENT'S INSTRUCTION TO GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS TO SERVE THE PEOPLE RATHER THAN THEIR OWN BOSSES.

4. ONLY CRITICAL NOTE PUBLICLY REPORTED WAS STATEMENT BY DEMOCRATIC UNIFICATION PARTY (DUP) SPOKESMAN KIM NOK-YONG. KIM NOTED THAT EXCEPT FOR NON-AGGRESSION PACT PRESS CONFERENCE CONTAINED NOTHING NEW. OVERALL HE ASSESSED PRESS CONFERENCE AS "DISAPPOINTING."

5. EDITORIAL REACTION TO OTHER PORTIONS OF PRESS CONFERENCE MUTED BUT GENERALLY FAVORABLE.
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Message Attributes

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